

The Honorable Michael K. Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Powell:

As a customer of DIRECTV, I am writing to urge you to support the pending merger of EchoStar and HUGHES, the parent company of DIRECTV. I believe the merger will increase video and broadband choices for consumers like me.

The combined company will be a much stronger competitor to cable operators by being able to offer me local TV channels via satellite in my market area, which I currently do not receive.

I currently have broadband access to the Internet, but the combination of EchoStar and HUGHES will result in increased competition in the broadband market by providing an affordable high-speed Internet service nationwide via satellite.

In addition, I would like to add a shrill note of protest: After nearly 30 years of unfettered consolidation of wealth and power in the mass media, after allowing one company to own nearly all the radio stations in America, after allowing cable services to run roughshod over consumers and thoroughly abuse their positions as public utilities, after allowing the badly needed modernization of broadcast television to completely stall and likely face the same slow death as our conversion to the metric system years ago, I for one, am happy to see that the FCC has finally decided to wake up, get back to work, and put the brakes on the growing satellite TV menace. I applaud the agency's courage in preventing the complete domination of rural TV markets by these ubiquitous gray platters. Surely the threat that this merger presented to free competition and better service for consumers is obvious to all? Lord knows, AOL/TimeWarner has enough to worry about without facing this clearly unconstitutional threat. Microsoft a dangerous monopoly? Ha!

The Federal government's regulation of the airwaves has become nothing more than a clearinghouse for the highest bidder. Just because Rupert Murdoch stamps his little feet when prevented from buying HNS doesn't mean that the people supposedly guarding the public trust should quiver! Mr. Powell should be ashamed of himself.

I appreciate your consideration of my views.

Sincerely,

Boyd Vladyka
3901 Leafield Drive
Austin, TX 78749